

PATENT
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Application for U.S. Patent

of

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for

WINE AND SPIRITS BOTTLE CARRY-OUT PACKAGE WITH ADVERTISING

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Title Of Invention

WINE AND SPIRITS BOTTLE CARRY-OUT PACKAGE WITH ADVERTISING

Prior Applications

[0001] This is a continuation in part of U.S. Patent application No. 10/025,738 filed December 19, 2001.

Field Of The Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for placing advertising on wine and spirits bottles, which provides both advertising and a means to protect the bottles from damage in a shopping bag or box.

Background Of The Invention

[0003] The use of bottle advertisers has long been recognized. As a result, various inventions have been developed to effect this practice. Some of these include: U.S. Pat. No. 5,289,650 to Follett; U.S. Pat. No. 4,208,819 to Jones; U.S. Pat. No. 2,132,236 to Greene; U.S. Pat. No. 1,999,011 to Wasser; U.S. Pat. No. 1,536,445 to Maupai; and U.S. Pat. No. 1,473,313 to Piatt.

[0004] Prior art bottle advertisers have all been adapted for mounting on the bottle when it is stocked on a store shelf. Since these advertising devices are designed for mounting to a bottle prior to sale, they are limited in their advertising space because it is not desirable to obscure the label of the bottle with the advertising device. Therefore, these bottle advertisers are designed to

fit on the neck of a bottle. Consequently, advertisers have a limited amount of space upon which to place advertising material. Efforts to increase the amount of advertising space have resulted in the invention of devices that are less easily manufactured or assembled, or which require more room for shipping or storage.

[0005] A more desirable bottle advertiser would be one that can be easily and quickly attached to a bottle at the point of sale. Since such an advertiser could be utilized after a consumer has purchased the bottle, and obscuring the label is therefore no longer of any concern, the advertiser can be designed to surround the base of the bottle. Such an advertiser would serve the purpose of providing more space upon which to place advertising material, but also serve the practical purpose of protecting bottles from one another, thereby preventing breakage, chafing, and noise, which can often result from the presence of multiple bottles in a single bag or box.

[0006] - - Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to create a bottle advertiser that protects the bottle and provides more space upon which to place advertising material. It is a further object of the present invention to take advantage of the location of the bottle advertiser to also employ it as a device for protecting bottles from one another. Because such an advertiser may obscure labels on the bottle, it is yet another object of the present invention to create an advertiser that is easy to assemble or adjust to the size of the bottle at the point of sale of the bottle.

Summary Of The Invention

[0007] The invention also relates to a method of advertising comprising the steps of fabricating bottle packaging dividers that each have an exterior face, imprinting advertising information on the exterior faces, distributing the bottle

dividers to retail outlets licensed to sell bottles of wine or liquor, or to merchandising companies, and employees of the retail outlets mounting the bottle dividers to bottles of wine or liquor sold by the retail outlets at the time of packaging individual bottles for taking by a purchaser, or employees of merchandising companies mounting the bottle dividers to bottles of wine or liquor when merchandising the bottles.

Brief Description Of The Drawings

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a bottle packaging divider having two sheets.

[0009] FIG. 2 is an elevation view of a first sheet of a bottle packaging divider.

[0010] FIG. 3 is an elevation view of a second sheet of a bottle packaging divider.

[0011] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a bottle packaging divider as shown in Fig. 1, with a group of bottles, placed in a shopping bag.

[0012] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a bottle packaging divider placed in a carton.

Detailed Description Of The Invention

[0013] The method of advertising of the invention using the bottle packaging divider described hereafter comprises the steps of: fabricating bottle dividers that have an exterior face and imprinting advertising information on the

exterior faces. The bottle dividers are then distributed through distributors and merchandising companies, or directly, to retail outlets licensed to sell bottles of wine or liquor. Employees of the retail outlets then use the bottle dividers to separate bottles of wine or liquor sold by the retail outlets, typically at the time of packaging individual bottles for taking by a purchaser by placing the bottle dividers in bags or cartons used by the retail purchaser to take his purchase home. (In this application, the term "employees of the retail outlets" is intended to encompass all personnel working on site, and includes store employees, independent contractors, employees or independent contractors of merchandising companies, etc.).

[0014] In some cases, where display bottles may be displayed adjacent to or separately from inventory bottles, the bottle dividers may be pre-mounted to the inventory bottles where convenient and consistent with the product marketing at the particular retail outlet. In such cases, the mounting may be done at the retail outlet, or even by manufacturers or distributors, prior to delivery of the bottles to retail outlet. However, it is expected that this will not be the preferred method of the invention, as consumers typically prefer to select a bottle off the shelf without any cluttering packaging or information.

[0015] Referring to FIGS. 1-4, a typical embodiment of the present invention takes the form of a bottle packaging divider 10 which comprises a cushioning material. The cushioning material comprises a corrugated paper or plastic material. The bottle packaging divider 10 is imprinted with advertising information 22. The bottle packaging divider 10 can constitute a single sheet 14 as shown in FIG. 2, but more typically, the bottle packaging divider 10 comprises at least two sheets 14 and 16 as shown in FIG. 1. Where there are two such sheets, either one or both such sheets may be imprinted with advertising information 22 on one or both sides. As seen in FIGS. 2 and 3, sheets 14 and 16

have slits 18 and 20 respectively cut therein. Sheets 14 and 16 may be mounted to each other by fitting together slits 18 and 20 of the two sheets to form a cross-shaped assembly. There are potentially eight (8) different advertising positions available on each face of the two sheets which are mounted together, though it is likely to be preferable to limit the number of advertisers to one, two or four advertisers. The sheets 14 and 16 are sized so that when they are mounted to each other they fit within a shopping bag 24 of a predetermined size, as shown in FIG. 4. The invention contemplates that the two sheets 14 and 16 will be mounted to each other by employees of the retail outlets using the bottle packaging dividers, then placed within bag 24 to separate bottles 26.

[0016] In another embodiment, shown in FIG. 5, the bottle packaging divider may be used in a carton 28. A typical wine or spirits carton holds twelve bottles 26, requiring five or more sheets, and providing numerous potential advertising positions.

[0017] While the present invention has been shown in the drawings and fully described above with particularity and detail in connection with what is presently deemed to be the most practical and preferred embodiment(s) of the invention, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that many modifications thereof may be made without departing from the principles and concepts set forth herein, including, but not limited to, variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use.

[0018] Hence, the proper scope of the present invention should be determined only by the broadest interpretation of the appended claims so as to encompass all such modifications as well as all relationships equivalent to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification.